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THE
SAINT NICHOLAS GIFT,

FOR
LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

~~~~~  
1847.  
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INTRODUCTION.



“ Oh children come look, for St. Nicholas sure
Has emptied his pack on the floor,
Here are dolls, ships and horses, tin soldiers and drums,
Fine playthings, a dozen or more.

“ But pray do you see no square, gilt, little book ?
Our old friend has not surely forgot,
Pray lift them all softly, and carefully look—
Did you ever behold such a lot ?

“ Ah, here I have found it, St. Nicholas Gift
For Christmas and happy New Year,
The date EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVEN,
Sit down quickly and read it, my dear.”

THE
SAINT NICHOLAS GIFT.

1847.

THE LITTLE GARDENERS.

JAMES and Henry were very good boys. Their father had a garden, and he gave them a part of it which was to be their garden. He had it nicely ploughed, and manured, and weeded, and gave them a variety of things from his large garden to put into it.

They had a nice border of green box all around the outside of it, and upon each side of the path which divided the garden of James from that of

Henry. There were rose bushes, and raspberry bushes, and currant bushes, placed in different parts of each little garden, and in the middle of each was a place, which Mr. Porter, for that was the name of the father of the boys, said, would be very good for some kind of fruit tree to be set out.

As Mr. Porter had no young tree which he thought of the proper size and kind to put into the boys' garden, he gave them leave to go to the garden of a person in the neighborhood who sold young trees of a suitable size for transplanting.

The boys were very much pleased with the thought of taking a ride in a railroad car, and of visiting this fine garden, and also of getting trees from which they hoped to enjoy a great deal of good fruit.

As they lived at some distance from the station from which the train of cars started in

which they were to go, they walked very fast, for fear they should be left, but as they had started in good season, they arrived five minutes before the time in which the cars left the station, and were able to select good seats, and fortunately each little boy could find himself by an open window.

After they had got well fixed themselves, they had time to watch the other people who came to take their seats in the car. They saw one poor sick lady who looked very weak and feeble, and when she was seated in the car and her friends who had attended her kissed her and bade her good bye, they looked very sorry, and as if they were afraid they should never see her come home again.

Then they saw a merry party of boys, who were going home at the beginning of a school vacation. They were quite noisy and happy, and very busy in seeing their baggage well taken

care of, and when they were seated they fell to talking over earnestly the events of the last few days at school, giving their opinions as to the fairness with which the prizes at the last examination had been distributed, and then passing rapidly to the pleasures which they expected to enjoy in the vacation which was now beginning.

Just before it was time for the cars to move, came running a woman accompanied by a little boy, with a somewhat large bag made of the matting with which plants are sometimes covered in the garden during the cold weather. The bag seemed to be pretty heavily laden, and as they entered the station house, one of the men engaged in fitting off the train seized it up to place it in the baggage car, while the woman and her boy hastened after to endeavor to take their seat in one of the cars.

But the train had already begun to move, and it was not safe for the woman and boy to try to

get in, and to add to their trouble while they were hastening after the bag, and a ray of hope still remained, the bottom of the matting gave way, and out dropped a sausage, and then another and another. The woman and boy, in running, stooped to recover the savory articles, when the hole becoming every moment larger, at last out dropped a plump ham. The cars had now got into such rapid motion, that the man told them it was in vain to try to get in, and that if they would wait an half hour there would be another train. The woman said this would be just as well, and perhaps by that time her husband, who was a little behindhand, might arrive, and she should be able in the meantime to fix up her bag a little better and restore her sausages and ham to it, with the hope that they would not tumble out again.

James and Henry and all the passengers were quite interested in this scene, and felt very sorry

that the woman and her boy were left, though they could not help laughing for a moment when they saw the things one after another dropping out of the bag. When the conductor came along, Mr. Porter asked him what would become of the poor woman, and he told him that she could come along by the next train, and also that she expected her husband to be with her by that time.

The cars now got into rapid motion, and the boys enjoyed the pleasant whizzing over dams and bridges, and soon rejoiced in finding themselves out in the green fields, and in sight of trees, some of which were in blossom. After a ride of about fifteen minutes, they reached the station where James and Henry were to leave the cars. They jumped out with their father, leaving the school-boys to pursue their way to their homes, and the poor sick lady to go on much farther to the south, where she hoped the

mild breezes would bring back to her health and strength.

Mr. Porter and his boys stood on the platform till the train of cars had passed by, then they crossed over the track and ascended a flight of steps which led to the gardens they had come out to visit. The air smelt very sweet, for there were some early sweet violets already in bloom. They walked up and down the paths, and saw some of the earlier flowers putting up their heads.

At last they came to the master of the garden, and Mr. Porter told him that he wanted two nice pear trees, for his boys to place in their garden. The gardener described to him the different kinds he had, and at last they concluded to take a Seekle pear for James, and a Bartlett pear for Henry, and Mr. W. promised to have them put up in such a way that they could

be safely carried to Mr. Porter's garden, and placed in the spot prepared for them.

While the gardener was taking up the trees, Mr. Porter and his boys walked down towards the station, and had the satisfaction to see, as the train which followed their own stopped for a few minutes, that the woman, her little boy and the bag were safely stowed in the forward car, and beside them sat a jolly looking man, who, from his close resemblance to the lad, left no doubt remaining that he was the father who had lagged behind ; they all now seemed to be pursuing their journey, in the happiest frame of mind possible.

As some time remained before the cars in which our party were to return home would arrive, they took a stroll into a neighboring wood, and saw some of the earlier wild flowers popping up their heads from under the bed of dry leaves which had kept them warm all winter.

They found to their great joy a few of the little early anemonies with their purple shaded blossoms, and after having strayed about some time, and heard the birds singing loudly and clearly as they were selecting their summer residences and getting together the materials for building, they went back to the station, where they found their trees all ready for them, neatly put up in matting.

The gardener had hardly finished giving his directions as to the best method of setting out the trees, when a puffing and whizzing was heard, and along came the great iron horse with a long train of cars behind him. The boys and their father jumped in and were soon at their journey's end. A crowd of men in the station house assailed them in the usual manner, with "A hack, sir?" "Have a carriage?" "A nice cab, sir," &c. At first the boys, who were very well behaved, thought they must say, "No, I

thank you, sir," to every one of these questions, but seeing their father took no notice of them, they grasped their trees firmly, and said nothing, but pushed their way home through the crowd as well as they could.

When they got home, as it was almost dark and they were all tired, Mr. Porter put the trees in a damp place, thinking it best to put off setting them out until the morning.

The exercise of the afternoon had given the boys a good appetite for the supper that was awaiting them, and having related the adventures of the ride, and studied their evening lessons, they went to bed resolving to get up early and set out their trees in the garden.

They awoke in good season and proceeded to their labors. The gardener had prepared a deep hole for each of the trees, and they assisted each other in planting them, one holding up the tree,

the other putting the dirt carefully about the roots with his little spade.

If our young readers would have a more exact idea of the scene we have been describing, let him turn to our frontispiece, where it will appear as represented by a skillful artist. As the ground had been so carefully prepared, the trees so well selected, and so well set out, and as the boys were very careful in attending to the garden, there can be but little doubt that they will succeed, and if any of the readers of the St. Nicholas should happen to be passing their garden some few years hence, they would do well to call and see the **LITTLE GARDENERS**, and they may perhaps be invited to taste their fruit.



SLEEPING INNOCENCE.

Sleep, innocent, sleep, my darling thou art,
Closed are thy blue eyes, thou joy of my heart,
On the green turf thou liest, thy mother is by,
She watches to scare off the quick teasing fly.

Now, oh thou loved one, the hours shine like gold,
Later, such moments thou shalt not behold,
Sad cares and heavy will crowd round thy bed,
Not in such quiet will rest thy dear head.

Angels from heaven all lovely and fair,
Now float round thee, while they glad visions
prepare,
In days that come after they too shall be near,
But their errand will then be, to dry the sad tear.

Quietly sleep, then, by day or by night,
Thy mother is near thee, still wakeful and bright,
Early or late, she her constant watch keeps,
For a mother's love, dear one, ne'er slumbers nor
sleeps.

MADAM PEACOCK

AND HER LIVING PICTURES.

The weather was fine,
For cold winter was o'er,
And the birds were more happy
Than ever before.

They had tea-drinkings, sociables,
Parties and Balls,
With concerts and suppers,
And stiff morning calls.

At last Madam Peacock
Invited them all,
To a new kind of show,
Neither tea, hop, or ball.

They should see Living Pictures,
Which she happened to know,

Among beaux and belles
Were a favorite show.

The birds were much pleased,
Every one wished to go,
And among all the answers,
There was hardly a No.

A fine spot was selected,
The best light and shade,
While a sizeable Palm leaf
A nice curtain made.

At last the day came,
For daylight they chose,
Because birds, with the sun,
Take an early repose.

The guests all in order,
Disposed themselves round,
Not a branch within sight,
Could empty be found.

The Bell Bird* from Guiana
Gave the sign to begin,
The Palm leaf was moved,
Oh, the sight seen within !

The Death of Cock Robin,
Displayed in full view,
Poor Cock Robin, Rash Sparrow,
The arrow, too true.

A thrill of emotion
Passed through the whole crowd,
Some silently shuddered,
Some peeped out aloud.

The birds gazed in amazement,
How long I can't tell,
Till the curtain was closed
At the sound of the bell.

* The Campanero, a snow white bird found in Guiana, is said by travelers to make a sound precisely like the ringing of a bell.

Again Campanero

Gave his note loud and shrill,
Again opened the Palm leaf,
The audience sat still.

The next living picture

Was Jenny Wren, sweet,
When her sad illness over,
She and Cock Robin meet.

How modest stood Jenny,

It was just at the time
When Robin first asks,
“Jenny, will you be mine?”

In exactly three minutes,

The time most approved,
The Bell Bird gave his chime,
The green curtain was moved.

The company twittered

And sang their applause,

And their joy and approval
Was not without cause.

Again opened the curtain,
And now for the last,
It was Cock Robin's trial,
The sentence just passed.

There was seated Judge Eagle,
The jury all round,
There Constable Cock
Maintained boldly his ground.

There Sparrow relieved,
Made his bow to the court,
The birds well knew the scene,
They had read the Report.

The closing bell sounded,
The curtain shut close,
And from the spectators
What a twittering arose !

“ How charming, how true,
Mrs. Peacock, my dear,
How much we all thank you
For bringing us here.”

The Cock crowed approval
As loud as he could,
While the small birds protested
It was all very good.

They all made bows and courtesies,
With air most polite,
And took leave of their hostess,
For near drew the night.

They needed no rubbers,
Cloak, tippet or hood,
But flew on light wings,
To their homes in the wood.



A VISIT TO GRANDMOTHER.

It was one of those happy days when the whole family had gone out to the Cottage to see grand-mama and grandpapa, and how glad every body was ; what embracing, and laughing, and kissing, and how long it took to get it fairly settled which was really little Mary, and whether it was possible that Philip had grown so tall, and when it was told why father and uncle James had not come, and that they were coming the next train, the party began to breathe a little more freely.

What could be more pleasant than Mr. and Mrs. Gray's shaded cottage, and what more lovely than the calm, quiet happiness of their old age ? They had passed through many days,

some sad, and many happy ones. Their children had all but one daughter gone away to form households of their own, but they lived at such short distances from their parents, that they could often return to the home of their youth, and bring with them their children to gladden the hearts of their aged parents.

Mama and aunt Agnes had walked down the lane with aunt Jane, the only daughter remaining at home, and Philip and Mary remained with grandmama under the shade of the vine which crept over the seat at the cottage door.

"Grandmother," said Philip, "as we rode out over the neck to-day, I saw mother point out to aunt Agnes a place where she said the Fortification gates once stood. Was Boston ever shut in by gates?"

"Yes, my dear," said grandmama, "when I was not much larger than you are, the British army took possession of the town of Boston, and



put gates across the neck of land which was then the only road by which persons could leave the town, and a guard was kept to prevent people from coming in and going out."

"I have read," said Mary, "in my Little History, about the American Revolution, and how the British tried to frighten the Americans with their ships and their armies, but they were not frightened, and at last refused to mind them at all, and published the Declaration of Independence, which we always read at our school the day before fourth of July. But did you live in Boston then, and was it not very funny, grandmother, to have them shut up the town with a gate every night to keep the people in, just as aunt Jane shuts the door of her chicken yard, when the hens have all gone to roost?"

"It may seem funny now to look back upon it, my dear, but we did not think it very funny then. The troops were galloping up and down

the streets all the time, but it is a very different thing to look out and see soldiers, when you know they are your own townsmen only dressed up for parade and to practice the use of their arms, and to look out and see soldiers of another nation, drawn up in warlike array, with guns really loaded, which they do not scruple to fire at people if they can find any excuse for it."

"It must have been very sad indeed. Were there not frequent quarrels between the British soldiers and the Americans?"

"There were one or two, of which you have, I dare say, read in your history. That called the Boston Massacre was one, but for the most part the people kept very quiet in their houses, hoping that some relief would come, and praying to God that he would deliver them from their oppressors."

"Almost every body that could left the town. The farmers in the neighborhood, who had for-

merly brought in meat and vegetables to the market, did not like to do it then, because they did not want to sell their articles to the enemies of their country, and so not only the British soldiers, but the Boston people themselves had very little to eat. Some person wrote a poem about the state of the town, addressed to the British soldiers, two lines of which were,

And what have you got, by all your designing,
But a town without dinner to sit down and dine in ?

“ And what did you do, grandmother, and your father and mother for something to eat ? ”

“ Oh, we had some difficulties, but the town was not as full of people then as it is now, and we had a large pasture at the back of our house, where my father kept two cows, so that we had plenty of milk.”

“ A pasture in Boston, where could it be, grandmother, it was the Common, was it not ? ”

“ No my dear, it was not the Common, though

that was used as a cow pasture, but the British army were encamped there, and must have sadly frightened the poor cows."

"But for meat for dinner, what could you do?" said Mary.

"Oh, we ate salted meats and salted fish, of which we had stores in the cellar. We did as well as we could, and did not think much of what we ate, for about that time, beside the fears we had from the soldiers, my dear sister Anabel, your mother's aunt, who is now dead, was very ill of a fever, and we feared she would never get well."

"And did she die then?" asked Philip.

"No, my dear, she recovered from that illness, and it was when she began to be a little better, and to have a little appetite, that I heard my father say one day, and he looked very sad, 'Oh, if I only had a small piece of sweet fresh

meat for poor Anabel, this salted meat is not good for a sick person.' ”

“The next morning my father, who was an early riser, got up before sunrise and went to take a stroll in his pasture, and as he opened the door his foot struck against something which lay on the door step. He stooped to see what it was, and to his joy discovered, wrapped up in a clean linen cloth, a nice fresh quarter of veal, with the delicate sweet bread of which I believe my little Mary always wants a piece, when she sees it on papa's table.”

“That I do, grandmama, and how glad your father must have been, and how did it come there ?”

“We were all most thankful, and my poor sister relished the little nice pieces of sweet fresh meat so much, after having been so long deprived of it, that she thought it was that which made her well.”

“And how did the meat come there?” said Philip.

“We did not discover for some time, but at last we learned that a friend of my father, who lived in the country near, and who knew that sister Anabel was ill, and how much we must want some of the comforts of life, found a man who was going to try on some business of his own to land at the north part of the town, in a boat in the night. He gave the meat to him, and directed him where to carry it, and the man succeeded as I have told you.”

“And did you stay in Boston all the time, grandmother, till the British left it.”

“No, my dear, my sister still continued so feeble that my father thought she would never get well if she were so shut up, and so he concluded to leave the town, and go in a ship to Halifax, a British colony you know which did not take part in the revolution, and stay there

till the troubles were over. So he bought a ship with another gentleman, and they put all their furniture on board, and my poor sick sister was carried to the vessel, and we were all so anxious about her that we thought but little of public matters."

"Then you sailed away to Halifax, grand-mama?"

"Not quite, my love. The vessel proceeded along, but the motion made poor Anabel so ill that we thought she would die, and as for some reason which I do not now remember, the ship stopped at Marblehead, my father, who was a timid man, and filled with fears for his daughter, gave up his plans of going to Halifax, and concluded to remain in Marblehead for the time. So we all disembarked, and our voyage was soon over, and my father was ever after thankful that he did not leave his native land, as if he had then gone he would probably never have returned."

"Well, grandmother, and did your sister get well?"

"Yes, my love, the fresh air did her a great deal of good, and after she got strong we moved to another town, and lived quietly until the war was over and Independence declared, and then we returned to good old Boston."

"Did you find it looking as it did when you went away?"

"There were many changes, but I had grown up from a little girl to a young lady, and had forgotten a good deal. My father's store had been burned down, but his house remained uninjured."

"But see, my children, there comes your mother and aunt, and your father and uncle are with them, and I see Betty has got her tea table laid, and her dishes of strawberries look very inviting, and your grandpapa seems to be just awaking from his nap. What a long talk your

question about the fortification gates has given rise to."

"Ah, dear grandmama, what a nice thing it is to be as old as you are, and to remember about the British soldiers, and Bunker Hill, and the Fortification Gates, and all."

"Ah, my child!"



A SONG ON THE WATER.

Oh, what a thing
 'Tis for you and me,
On an evening in spring,
 To sail on the sea !
The little fresh airs
 Spread their silver wings,
And o'er the blue pavement
 Dance love-makings.
To the tune of the waters,
 And tremulous glee,
They strike up a dance
 To people at sea.



THE MONKEY AND WILD BOAR.

A FABLE.

A MONKEY had retired to the depths of a forest, and lived upon the fruit of some fig trees which he found there. He followed the example of the ant, and preserved a part of the fruits, which he had the precaution to dry for his winter use. His life was spent tranquilly in his quiet retreat, when he was disturbed by the arrival in his neighborhood of a wild boar.

This animal having been pursued by the hunters, had retired into this same forest, and being pressed by hunger he sought for something to satisfy it. But he saw with sorrow all the trees stripped of their fruits.

He finally arrived at the foot of the tree on

which the Monkey was sitting. The Monkey on perceiving him saw that he might prove a troublesome visitor. He however concealed his vexation, and offered him his services. "The most important help you can give me," said the boar, "is to furnish me with something to eat. I am not particular in the choice of my food, I shall be content with the most simple, only pray be quick about it."

The monkey immediately shook the tree on which he was seated. The boar ate the figs as fast as they fell down, and the tree was stripped in a moment. The boar begged his entertainer to climb another tree. The fruit of the second was devoured with the same avidity as the first had been. But the appetite of the boar did not seem to be satisfied, and he made a sign to the monkey to go up the third tree.

"I have performed towards you," said the monkey, "all that the laws of hospitality require

of me, but it seems to me that you have not obeyed those of moderation. The fruits which you have eaten in a moment, would have been sufficient to nourish me for several months. If I obey you, I should find myself reduced to starvation this winter."

"Rash fellow," replied the boar, "it is very pretty in you to make me reproaches; I order you henceforth to leave this forest, or you will feel the effects of my anger."

"It is unjust," replied the monkey, "to take possession of the property of another. I know that you have the superiority over me in strength, but you ought not abuse your power by oppressing the feeble; sooner or later injustice will receive the punishment it deserves."

At these words the boar, filled with rage, attempted to climb the tree to revenge himself on the monkey, but he had scarcely reached the lower branches, than they broke under the enor-

mous weight with which they were loaded, and down fell the angry boar. His death, which followed his fall, delivered the monkey from his fears.



SONG OF SUMMER.

Summer is coming in,
Loud sing, cuckoo,
Groweth seed, and bloweth mead,
And springeth the wood now,
Sing cuckoo, cuckoo.

Ewe bleateth for her lamb,
Calf loweth for the cow,
Bullock starteth, buck departeth,
Merry sing cuckoo,
Cuckoo, cuckoo.
Well singeth the cuckoo,
Nor cease to sing, now
Sing cuckoo, now
Sing cuckoo.

THE RAT AND THE FROG.

A RAT lived on the borders of a marsh. A Frog, who was a citizen of the same region, sometimes came up from the bottom of the water to draw a breath of fresh air. One day she was indulging herself in croaking, and blinded by her vanity she thought she was charming the birds in the neighborhood with her notes, while she was only afflicting them with the sounds of her harsh voice.

The rat at this moment came out of his hole. The accents of the frog, disagreeable as they were, pleased him, and he showed by the movements of his head and tail all the pleasure which he felt. His praises flattered the frog, and she soon entered into an acquaintance with him who had praised her so much.

"My dear friend," said the rat to her one day, "there are moments when I have a thousand things to say to you, and I cannot find you, for perhaps you are at that moment asleep at the bottom of the water. In vain I call you, my voice cannot reach you, and as I do not know how to dive it is impossible for me to go and seek you."

"If you will consent, I will employ a method which friendship has suggested to me, I will fix a long string, one end of which shall be tied to one of your feet, and the other to one of mine. Thus we shall be able to give notice to each other, and nothing will prevent our agreeable meetings."

The frog consented, and our two friends, with the help of the string, made each other frequent visits. Unfortunately for them, the rat was one day espied by a Falcon who was flying in the air. He descended, picked up the rat, and

carried him off, and by means of the string the frog was forced to follow. Thus perished the unfortunate animal, in consequence of having formed too intimate an acquaintance with one whose habits and tastes were altogether different from her own.



R I D D L E .

I.

Though I am neither bush or tree,
Yet many leaves have I,
And pages many wait on me,
A plentiful supply.

I am black and white, and sometimes brown,
Of various shape and size,
Am grave or gay, am long or short,
Am foolish or am wise.

With gold and silk and leather fine,
I am often decked quite gay,
But sometimes I no cover have
By night or even day.

Though born in freedom, hard I'm pressed,
And sometimes tightly bound,

On high I cruelly am hung,
And pierced with many a wound.

Now if my name you have not guessed,
You wisdom sure must lack—
But for your comfort use your eyes,
My name is on my back.



THE SULTAN AND HIS FALCON.

A FABLE.

THERE was once a Sultan who lived far away in a country of the East, who was very fond of hunting. It was the fashion of his time to train a bird called a falcon to hunt, and these birds were made very skillful in finding out and pouncing upon the game.

Now this Sultan had one falcon, whom he esteemed more than all the rest he had, on account of his rare qualities. The eye of this bird was as sharp as a lynx, and his flight was as rapid as lightning. The Sultan himself took care of this bird, and often held him upon his hand.

It happened one day that he was hunting,

and threw the bird on a gazelle. The falcon cut the air with its rapid flight. The gazelle, who saw her enemy over her head, ran so fast that she seemed scarcely to touch the ground with her light foot. The Sultan spurred his horse, and soon became separated from his attendants; meantime the gazelle, notwithstanding the efforts of the falcon, was so fortunate as to escape him.

It was a very hot day, the Sultan was thirsty, and sought for a stream where he could relieve the thirst with which he was tormented. He at last espied one, and untied from his saddle bow the golden cup which hung there.

As the water dropped slowly, it took a long time to fill the cup, and he was at last lifting it to his mouth, when the falcon, who was perched upon his wrist, overturned the cup with his wing. The Sultan after infinite trouble filled it again, but the falcon, with a second stroke of his,

wing disappointed him again. The monarch lost his patience, and in the rage with which he was transported he threw the falcon on the ground with so much force, that the bird lay dead at the horse's feet.

At the same moment one of the attendants of the prince arrived on the spot. He saw the cup overturned and the falcon without life. The Sultan informed him of the crime of the bird and the vengeance he had taken on him for it. He ordered the attendant immediately to seek for the source of the stream, where he would be able to draw water more easily.

The man walked to a little distance and discovered a fountain, in the middle of which he saw stretched out a monstrous serpent. He returned to the Sultan, and related to him what he had seen. "Alas," said the prince, heaving a deep sigh; "I have deprived of life him who

would have preserved mine. The water which my falcon prevented me from drinking, flowed from a spring which is made poisonous by this venomous serpent."



THE RIDE.

Three times one is three,
Will you go to ride with me ?

Three times two are six,
I will come and help you fix.

Three times three are nine,
Wind up that ball of twine.

Three times four are twelve,
I'll go and dress myself.

Three times five are fifteen,
While you your shoes are shifting.

Three times six are eighteen,
Don't keep the chaise long waiting.

Three times seven are twenty-one,
A veil will shade you from the sun.

Three times eight are twenty-four,
The horse is now before the door.

Three times nine are twenty-seven,
Now fix your dress quite smooth and even.

Three times ten are thirty,
The roads are somewhat dirty.

Three times eleven are thirty-three,
What a nice drive for you and me.

Three times twelve are thirty-six,
We must avoid that heap of bricks.



CHAIR CHATTING.

“WHAT a pity, mama, that it rains this afternoon,” said little Julia to her mother, “we were to have had such a nice walk, and then it would have been so useful too.”

“Your visit to the factory, you mean,” said her mother, “it would have been very pleasant, and you would, I dare say, have learned a great many things you do not know about the manner that the pods of cotton, such as your aunt brought home from the south, are turned into calico fit to make you a dress. But then this rain is very useful, and will make every thing grow nicely, and prevent the dust from flying about, and what I suppose is more to your purpose, it will not last forever, it will probably be

a fine day tomorrow, and then you can go and see and learn all you would have done to-day."

"But then mama, and I believe this is the greatest trouble after all, I do not know what I shall do this afternoon. My brothers and sisters you know will not come home till tomorrow, I have read my last new book—I have fixed my baby house all in order against sister Alice comes, and I do not like to disturb it."

"There is your work-box."

"But to work a holiday afternoon, does not seem to be very good."

"Well, let us look round the room and see if there is not something here which can give us amusement, and perhaps instruction."

"Oh, mama, these old things that I have seen a hundred times—the Piano, I cannot play upon it—the Bookstand, it is filled with great heavy books I don't want to read; the work-table—I don't think I shall like the story that would tell

me ; the writing-table—that looks too much like school ; the Sofa—that makes one sleepy.”

“ And yet, my dear, there was a great poet once who wrote a very pleasing poem about a Sofa.”

“ A poem about a Sofa, what could he say about it ? I cannot think of any thing but—

‘ A sofa is the best thing,
If you feel like resting.’ ”

“ That was pretty much what the poet said, though not exactly in those words. But there is your little arm-chair, what do you think of that for amusement and instruction ? ”

“ Oh it is a very good little chair, but when you have said that, there seems to be nothing more to say or think about it.”

“ Do you think the little girls in the early days of the world had such nice little chairs as that ? ”

"I never thought about it before, but I do not believe they did. What do you think mama they did sit on?"

"I do not know, but the first houses were probably rocky caves, and then I suppose the little girls and boys sat round on the sharp corners of the rocks which stuck out of the sides of the caves, or they may have rolled in now and then a loose stone to serve as a chair or a stool."

"That must have been rather hard, mama."

"Yes, but I suppose they could bring in some soft moss, or dry leaves, or rushes. But by and by men began to cut down the trees, and pile them up, and make houses something like what we call log houses now, and then I suppose they would get the ends of the logs and have them for seats. I have seen blocks nicely sawed off used in farmer's houses in the country, when I was young, for seats, and the children used to like them very well. Beside being very good to

put up close in the warm chimney corner of a winter evening, it was not considered the worst of sports to lay them down on their sides and roll them up and down the ample kitchen floor."

"Oh it must have been good fun, mama."

"We thought so, but the elders thought it rather noisy, and after one or two rolls there was apt to come a message from the other side of the house, which would put a stop to it."

"I do not know how it is, but the best fun is apt to be the noisiest."

"People are apt to think so, my child. Well, after these blocks had been in use a while, they were found to be somewhat heavy, and folks sawed off a little slice of the log, and stuck some sticks in it by way of making legs. At first they only put in three legs, and a three legged stool was prized much. It is thought that the famous King Alfred of England had nothing better than a three legged stool for a throne."

“Oh, mama, how it must have looked for a King to be sitting on such a thing as that.”

“After a while, they changed the three legs into four, and then they began to make cushions, and the ladies soon applied their skill to this branch of industry, in which they have been very fond of employing it ever since. They made cushions, and adorned them in various ways.

“Then people brought over the cane from India, and that was found very good to twist into a sort of net-work, and make the bottom of the seat. But still as people sat upon this, their backs grew tired, and somebody invented the plan of putting up two sticks at the back of the chairs, and weaving the cane between them.

“These chairs with the cane seats and the stiff high backs were used by your grandmother’s grandmother, and that one up in the corner, to which your cousin Mary has just worked

such a pretty canvass cover, was one of that kind. The cane was broken away, but the frame, which was of hard wood, was strong, and as there is a fashion now for bringing back these old relics, we had it stuffed and covered with canvass work.

“Another kind of the same form, but made of leather, was very much used. In later days, chairs have been made of almost every form and material. They are nicely stuffed, and made very easy. A very common covering now for chairs and sofas is horse hair.”

“Horse hair, mama, I know this black covering is called so, but is it really the hair of horses?”

“Yes, my dear, I believe so, and I am amazed when I think what an immense number of horses must be cropped to supply all the demand for this article, which is now so much used. I

suppose only the manes and tails are employed for this purpose."

"Then the cover of my chair was probably once running round, where mama?"

"The wilds of South America, I believe it is brought from."

"Yes, and the frame of it was probably standing in the shape of a great tree in Honduras, for from there mahogany is brought."

"What a story it would tell, if it could talk about the things of which it is made."

"Will you be so kind as to ring the bell, Julia, I should like to have the lamp lighted?"

"Why, it has grown dark, and the afternoon has passed away, I did not think it would have gone so quickly, and very pleasantly too. I have not thought about the walk or the factory. I am glad you happened to think about my chair, it is funny we found so much to say about it."

“Now the lamp is lighted, you may bring me that green-covered book from the stand, and I will find a place where you can read me something about the horses in South America, and how they are caught, and perhaps we shall learn something about the way the hair is procured, and fixed and woven into this nice smooth covering.

“There is another kind of coarser hair which is used with moss and other articles for stuffing the seats and sides of chairs.

“After we have done reading that, we will find Mr. Cowper’s Poem about the Sofa, and there you can read what I have told you and a great deal more, much better than I have been able to say it.”

“Oh, mother, we have got enough to do for the whole evening.”

RIDDLE.

II.

Although I have a large round face,
No mouth nor eyes have I.
My posture is erect and firm,
Yet when I stand I lie.

I have two hands which constant move,
But with a different speed,
They teach to others, though alas,
They neither speak nor read.

Though peaceful in my nature, I
Am often found to strike
My friends or foes, 'tis all the same,
My blows are hard alike.

But mind my warnings, for they tell
A tale of joy or pain,
And that which I for once have struck,
Never comes back again.

MARY'S CALICO GOWN.

A HISTORY TOLD IN THE MANNER OF THE "HOUSE
THAT JACK BUILT."

LITTLE Mary went down in town, by the side of her mother to buy a new gown. What a fine shop was kept by good Mr. Brown, where Mary's kind mother bought her a new calico gown. A nice railroad station just out of town, where the fine railroad car from Lowell brought down, the bales of calico nicely boxed round, which went to the store of kind Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her calico gown. A fine tall factory painted brown, up in Lowell, that famous town, whence the railroad cars brought down to the railroad station just out of town, the bales of calico nicely boxed round, which went

to the store of kind Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her her calico gown. The pleasant young woman with hair so brown, who worked in the tall factory looking down, up in Lowell, that famous town, whence came the railroad cars whizzing down, to the railroad station just out of town, bringing the bales of calico all boxed around, which went to the store of kind Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her her new calico gown. The mighty power looms going up and down, tended by the young woman with hair so brown, in the tall factory looking down, up in Lowell that famous town, whence came the railroad cars whizzing down to the railroad station, just out of town, with the bales of calico nicely boxed round, which went to the store of kind Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her her calico gown.

The merry spindles turning round, which spun the cotton the weaver found so good to

stamp with a purple ground, which was wove in the power looms going up and down, tended by the young woman with hair so brown, in the tall factory looking down, up in Lowell, that famous town, whence came the railroad cars whizzing down, to the railroad station just out of town, with the bales of calico nicely boxed round, which went to the store of good Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her her calico gown.

The large stout ship with sails so brown, which brought from Georgia the cotton down, which went up to the factory painted brown, built in Lowell, that wonderful town, which the spinning jenny with whizzing sound, spun into cotton smooth and round, which was woven in the power looms which go up and down, and are tended by the young woman with hair so brown, stamped by the huge brass roller which turned around, and brought in the railroad cars

whizzing down, to the railroad station just out of town, in bales of calico nicely boxed round, which went to the store of kind Mr. Brown, where Mary's mother bought her her CALICO GOWN.



ROUND GAMES.

ALL little children are fond of the round games, where they join hands and dance round, repeating all at once some well known lines of poetry, and performing an action suited to the words. The little girls of the present day with us play the same games of that kind, and repeat the same verses as their mothers and grandmothers have done ever since Eve's grandchildren met together to celebrate each other's birth days. Who does not know,

Uncle John is very sick,

What shall we send him ?

Two good wishes, two good kisses,

And a spice of ginger.

Who shall we send it by ?

By the Governor's daughter,

What shall we send it in ?

In a golden saucer.

These words having been sung, while the company have danced round in a circle, one standing in the middle, this person selects one from the round, and leads him or her into the centre, when the circle again closes, and they all dance round the two singing,

Master Bobby, (naming the gentleman,) so they say,
Goes a courting night and day,
Sword and pistol by his side,
Miss E. G. (name a lady,) shall be his bride.

Then the gentleman selects the lady named, and they join the circle, turning their faces outward, and this goes on till all the party have chosen in turn. The gentleman chosen whispers to the director of the round the name of the person he selects; this—and “Had I as many Wives,” “Barberry Bush,” and others of the kind, are too well known to our young readers to need a more particular description.

But it may please them to know that the little

French girls and boys play games exactly of this kind, many of them having almost the same words with those with which we are so familiar. The following account, taken from a French book of games, may amuse American children, though it is doubtful whether these new games ever become such great favorites as the old ones.

In every round game where any action is to be performed, or a forfeit ordered, the company should first choose a young lady or gentleman for a director. It is his or her duty to make all the dancers pass over to the left when they have taken their turns, and the director does not pass over himself until no one remains to go from the right to the left, and this finishes the game. The following game is described in the book we have mentioned, and called

THE FAGGOTS.

The circle is formed, and they all sing, dancing around ;

To the woods no more we go,
The faggots are cut and lie below.

Here the director takes a lady from his left hand, and leads her into the middle, they all sing and dance once round,

“This fair lady will bring them home.”

The gentleman who stood next the lady chosen advances to the middle and says :

“Hark ! I hear the merry drum.”

The lady replies :

“It is my mother calls me home.”

They all join hands and sing :

“And does your mother know you are out,
Then join hands and turn about.”

The two in the middle then join hands and turn about as directed, and then take their places at the opposite side of the director, from where they were taken.

Another of these games is called

THE BRIDAL.

The circle being formed, the company dance round, singing,

“ Who shall be the bride to-day ? ”

The director selects a young lady, and they sing

“ Pretty Miss, shall it be you ? ”

The lady goes into the middle of the circle, and the company dance round her, singing,

“ Dance with us so merrily,
I love him, I love him, I love him who first loves me. ”

They then sing, dancing round,

“ Who shall we give to the bride to-day ? ”

The director selects a gentleman.

“ Master fine shall it be you ? ”

He is led into the middle, and they sing,

“ Dance with us so merrily,
I love her, I love her, I love her who truly loves me. ”

They then dance round singing,

“ Bride and Bridegroom now join hands.”

They join hands.

“ Merrily, dance merrily,

“ For I love him, I love him, I love him and her who
loves me.”

Another of these Rondos is called

THE NEW DANCE.

The director of this Rondo is called the Captain, and he must give his orders in a loud tone. The whole company only repeat the chorus, and every one imitates the motions of the captain. They dance round all singing the chorus,

“ Have you seen the fine new dance,
All the fashion now in France ?”

They stop, and the captain sings and makes the motion.

“ Pay attention—mind the word—
Stretch out one hand, then the other.”

They all sing,

“ And thus begins the fine new dance,
All the fashion now in France.”

The captain sings and makes the motions.

“ Pay attention—mind the word—
Stretch out one foot, then the other.”

All together.

“ And so goes on the fine new dance
All the fashion now in France.”

Captain.

“ Pay attention—mind the word,
Stretch out one hand, then the other,
Put out one foot—then the other.”

Each gentleman takes the lady on his right, and
dances round, singing,

“ And so goes on the fine new dance,
All the fashion now in France.”

Captain.

“ Pay attention—mind the word,
First with one foot, then with two,
One foot, two feet, so we do.”

Each person turns, first the person on his right hand, then the one on his left, all at once, all singing,

“And so we finish this fine dance,
All the fashion now in France.”

Some little alterations have been made in these games in translating them from the French. These alterations were necessary, to adapt them to the customs of this country.

Among the French Rondos is one very much like that so well known here, which begins—
“Thus my father sows his seed.” We give but one more of these, which is called

THE DOCTOR.

The director of this game is called a doctor. He takes the arm of the person placed next to him on the right, looks at him with pity, feels his pulse, and gives his directions. The doctor and his patient stand in the middle, while the

circle dance round, the doctor saying the following, and all repeating after him,

“ Let me cure you, let me cure you,
You look ill, you look ill,
Loula, Loula,
You look very ill indeed.”

The doctor here selects a gentleman, if his patient is a lady, or a lady if he be a gentleman, he sings, and all repeat after him,

“ Join hands and turn this lady here,
That will cure you, that will cure you,
That will cure you sure, my dear.”

Every body in the circle is submitted to this treatment, until every one being cured, the doctor gives up his dignity and office to the last person who has enjoyed the benefit of his advice.

THE BOY AND THE SNAIL.

THERE was once a little boy who had been taking a walk, and he came to a shady place under a tree where he laid himself down to rest, and not far from him on a damp pathway he saw a large snail lying.

He had often seen the empty shell of the snail, but he never before had seen one with the living animal in it, and he touched this shell with a little stick he held in his hand, that he might make madam snail move off with her house on her back.


But when the snails are a little frightened, they probably think the best thing they can do is to keep quiet and still in their little snug

houses, so the more the boy touched him with his stick the more quiet lay the snail, at last the boy began to repeat all the rhymes, of which there are a great many, addressed to the snail, which he could call to mind. He began with the rhymes in Mother Goose, which go thus :

Snail, snail, come out of your hole,
Or else I will beat you black as a coal,
Snail, snail, put out your horns,
Here comes a thief will pull down your walls.

But the snail did not move for that, and then the boy said another rhyme, which a little German boy had taught him :

Snail, snail, come out of your door,
Show me your horns, one, two, three, four,
If you do not show them soon,
I will put you under the heavy mill stone.
The mill wheel will grind you all to flour,
So snail, snail, come out of your door.



But still the snail did not stir, then he said :

Out of your house, little snail crawl,
Show your fingers, five in all,
If you do not mind what I say,
In a hole I will hide you far away,
I will tell the raven to peck you,
I will bid the musquito prick you.
On you in your little bed they shall fall,
Out of your house little snail crawl:

Then another.

Snail come out
And look about.
Here comes two,
With meat for you.
Here comes one,
With a heavy gun
To shoot you dead.
So snail, snail, put out your head.

And then the following :

Little Nun in the snail's house,
Hiding there as sly as a mouse,

Here comes the Friar before the sun,
To say good morning to the little fair Nun.

While he was repeating this rhyme in rather a sleepy manner, he perceived what he had never seen before in the garden, a smooth clear lake, which came very near the place where he was lying. He started up to look more closely at it, and the smooth soft grass on which he had been resting was changed to a bold rock jutting out into the water.

While he looked with astonishment at these wonders, he saw a boat of a singular form approaching the shore. It floated bravely upon the waves, but resembled in form the snail shell which he had been so long watching, though it far exceeded it in size. He immediately began to sing out in a loud tone one of the snail ditties which he had been repeating, but he had hardly finished the first line,

Out of your house little snail crawl,

when, to his great amazement, from the mouth of this strange boat issued an old man, with a long beard and a heavy oar in his hand.

“What do you want of me?” said the old man, in a tone that made the little boy forget all his snail ditties.

“Indeed, sir,” said the little boy, “I did not mean to disturb such an old gentleman as you are, in his afternoon nap, I had never seen one of the inhabitants of the little twisted palaces which I meet with in my father’s garden, and I just thought—”

“Don’t tell me,” said the old man, “what you just thought, but just step into my boat, and I will teach you to disturb people with your songs about mill stones, and musquitoes, and nuns and friars.”

As he stretched out his hand to seize the boy’s shoulder, and showed that he could make pretty good use of his heavy oar, Jasper, for that was the boy’s name, made no resistance, but quietly

stepped into the strange looking craft, and seated himself on a little jutting edge of the inside timber. The old man followed and seated at the mouth of the boat, guided it with his oar in the manner which boatmen call sculling.

They made rapid progress through the water, and the boat was soon stopped at a little island. The old man descended to the shore, and ordered Jasper to do the same. Having first fastened his boat to a twisted post which was placed on the bank, he proceeded up a pathway which led to the principal town of the island.

Here every thing had a most singular appearance. The houses, great and small, were all built in the manner of snail shells. They were of various sizes, and of different materials.—Some were dazzling bright, as of gold or precious stones—others of a dark cold clay color. But what was most remarkable, as Jasper watched this strange village, he now and then

saw a house moving from place to place, and as he watched these moving houses, he could perceive the head and shoulders of a man or woman peeping out of every one.

The old man led Jasper to a very damp, shady corner of the village, where there was a house of an enormous size, and near it one much smaller.

"As you will probably be with us for some time, (I hope not very long, whispered Jasper to himself,) I shall beg you to make use of this house here behind us," said the old man, "it belonged to a nephew of mine who met with an accident the other day, and has no further use for it. A mischievous fellow threw him, house and all, under the mill stone, which pressed him so closely as to cause his death. There is a small crack in the house, but that is no matter. Before you retire to your new dwelling however, let me offer you some refreshment."

He then placed before the astonished boy some roots and vegetables. Jasper did not much like the appearance of them, but he was too well bred not to eat what was set before him, and as he had a pretty good appetite, he got along very well, though the food was a little too moist for his taste. The old gentleman was too busy about his own meal to pay much attention to Jasper.

When they had done eating, Jasper pointed with an inquiring eye to a whole troop of little houses which were hurrying off in the same direction. He felt too much afraid of the old man to ask where they were going, though he wanted sadly to know.

The old man saw his asking look, and said, "These little fellows you perceive walking along so briskly, are going to school, for different as our ways are from yours, we do not leave our young folks without proper teaching, and

now I think of it, you must join them, for as I have taken you under my care, I shall see you properly brought up. So get into the house which lies there ready for you, and march off with the rest, my little man."

Jasper, who did not like this proceeding much, ventured to tell the old man that he was not used to carrying his house on his back, and that if he pleased he should rather run off to school on his legs, and leave the house, which he had not yet learned all the twists and turns of, till he came home.

But the old gentleman did not like to have any one contradict him, and being rather quick in his movements, he seized up Jasper with his long bony arms and began to crowd him into his house, as he called it, though Jasper felt all the time it was nothing but an ugly snail shell.

He kicked and struggled and tried to cry out for help, but he could not make any noise, and

just as his head was entering the mouth of the shell, and receiving a hard knock from the top of it, for the old man was not very gentle in his movements, he awoke, (all this time he had been fast asleep under the pear tree,) and was much pleased to find nothing worse had happened to him, than that he had received a pretty hard blow from a large fine Saint Michael pear, which the wind had blown down upon him, and the blow from which had been changed as he slept, into the pain he felt from being crowded into the snail house.

He was very glad to find that matters were no worse with him. He looked round for the snail whose motions had attracted his attention before he fell asleep. She had walked off, house and all, and was nowhere to be seen. Jasper concluded to run home, pear in hand, and while the family were at supper he told the story of his dream. It seemed so remarkable, that one of

the company present retired directly after supper, and wrote down the particulars, and sent it with a sketch of the old man and his shell-like boat, to St. Nicholas, desiring him, if he thought best, to insert it in his next Annual. The good old friend of children, who was just making his preparations, received it joyfully, and sent it immediately to his printers.



R I D D L E .

III.

In various spots I have my birth,
In rivers, ponds, ocean, the earth,
But often I am lifted high,
And upwards borne towards the sky.
And up above there, friends I find,
Formed just like me, like me inclined,
We meet, and soon together run,
And down to earth again we come.
Our presence gladdens many a heart,
Fullness and freshness we impart,
The farmer sees us come with pleasure,
The housewife's joy is without measure.
But though our presence makes them gay,
Too long they would not have us stay,
Too long a visit gives them pain,
And they begin with might and main
To ask the sun, up in the sky,
To draw us soon again on high.

THE WOLF AND THE KID.

A GOAT on going from home one afternoon, gave the following counsel to her kid, a gay, playful little creature, whose discretion the mother had some reason to doubt. "My dear," she said, "I know that our enemies, the wolves, are constantly scouring the plains in search of prey, and it would therefore be dangerous for you to be seen. Take my advice, however, and no harm can possibly happen to you: should a stranger knock at the door during my absence, do not on any account admit him; and if any one claiming acquaintance should call, peep cautiously from the casement, to see if it be a relation."

"I will do as you bid, mother," said the youthful goat; "and, with your sanction, will permit no visitors whatever to have access till your return."

The mother goat approved, and departed, reassured as to the good conduct of her daughter. A gaunt, grim-looking wolf, who had watched the matron from home, now approached, and, imitating her voice, called upon the kid to unbar the door. "I have forgotten my shawl," he exclaimed, "and the winds on the downs are piercing cold." The kid had her foot to the latch to unfasten it; but a moment's reflection saved her from ruin. She went to the window to reconnoitre, and saw that the precautions of her mother had neither been vain nor over-tedious. On the return of the goat, the disappointed wolf slunk off to the hills, and the kid confessed that her safety had been entirely owing to the good advice of a kind and considerate parent.

THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A CAREFUL shepherd adopted such precautions to secure his flock from danger, that for some time the wolves were completely baffled in all their attempts upon his fold. At last he began, morning after morning, to miss a lamb, portions of the skin and bones of which, left on the spot, too plainly indicated that it had fallen a prey to the enemy. He was not a little alarmed at this mysterious spoliation ; but he was too shrewd to let fear overpower his sense of duty. He kept a strict watch over his charge at night, and by this means soon discovered the destroyer. A cunning old wolf had contrived to obtain possession of a sheep-skin, which by dint of a little

stretching and padding he had fitted to his own carcase, and, thus disguised, had crept into the fold. The shepherd made such good use of his time, that before daylight the robber was caught, and hung by a noose from the roof of a neighboring cottage. "Hey day!" exclaimed the farmer, to whom the sheep belonged, when he made his morning round and saw the suspended criminal; "How is this, master Watchwell; you must surely be mad to hang my sheep?" The shepherd with a smile replied, "You might say so, indeed, if I could be guilty of such folly: but just draw from those innocent brows their woolly covering. The knave deceived even me, by his specious appearance; but having detected him in the act of devouring a lamb, I was to be duped no longer, and notwithstanding his sheep's clothing, took the liberty to punish him as a wolf."

SUMMER PLEASURES.

Oh how fine, this summer day,
On the grass we run and play.
Grandpa, grandma, both are here,
Brothers too, and sisters dear.
Papa and Ma are baby watching,
While he the butterfly is catching.
Tom lies on the new mown hay,
Heap it quick upon him pray.
I wonder where the baskets are,
Filled with mother's dainty fare.
When we have somewhat longer played,
We will choose a pleasant shade.
There our table we will spread,
The old oak waving over head.





Tere our feast we will partake,
Dainties rare, pie, fruits and cake.
Nothing shall we think of leaving,
This Pic nic is sure worth having.
A finer day was never seen,
The air is soft, the sky serene.
The sun all radiant clear and bright,
Here we stay and play till night.



ANSWERS TO THE RIDDLES.

- No. 1. PAGE 47.—A BOOK.
“ 2. “ 64.—A CLOCK.
“ 3. “ 89.—RAIN.









